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ABSTRACT

This document briefly highlights how the Institution of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) supports all types of libraries and museums in the United States. Short lists of statistics on library connectivity, patrons, school library funding, and reference librarian services, and on museum visitors, museum services, and museum holdings are provided. The document also outlines how the IMLS helps museums and libraries serve the public. This information is presented under the following categories: investment in education; investment in access; investment in tools for the future; investment in families and children; investment in communities; investment in cultural heritage; strengthening museum and library service; grantmaking; evaluation; and communication. (AEF)

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Libraries

IMLS supports all types of libraries and archives including public, academic, research, and school libraries. There are over 122,000 libraries in the United States.

- Libraries are the ***#1 point of access to the Internet*** for Americans without computers at home or work. At least 90% of public libraries are connected to the Internet.
- Americans visit the library ***3.5 billion*** times each year.
- Each year Americans ***borrow more than 1.6 billion items*** from public libraries: books, magazines, records, tapes, and more.
- Well-funded school libraries bolster student reading scores. ***Higher average student reading scores correlate with higher funding for school libraries*** regardless of a community's economics or adult education levels.
- Reference librarians in public and academic libraries ***answer more than 7,000,000 questions weekly.***

Statistics provided by American Library Association, US Department of Education, and US Department of Commerce.

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facts: museums

IMLS supports all types of museums including art, history, and children's museums, science centers and zoos. There are approximately 15,000 museums in the United States: 75% are small museums and 43% are situated in rural areas.

- There are 865 million visits per year to American museums – a ***50% increase*** from just a decade ago. The museum-going trend coincides with museums' increased level of educational and community service.
- ***88% of museums offer programs for K-12 students***—50 million school children participate in these programs every year. In 1997 museums spent $193 million on student programs and provided 3.9 million instructional hours.
- Museums' emphasis on authenticity and intellectual excellence makes them ***trusted resources*** for researchers in every field.
- Museums use their subject matter expertise to develop ***curriculum related educational programs.***
- Museums care for the materials that represent our cultural heritage. They hold over ***750 million objects and specimens.***

Statistics provided by American Association of Museums and IMLS.

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MEETING FUTURE CHALLENGES

As we usher in the 21st century, libraries and museums are ***responding to the rapid changes*** brought about by new technologies, growing population diversity, and new educational initiatives.

In short, the needs and expectations of the American public are different than they were even five years ago. ***This change requires investment.*** IMLS is a uniquely responsive agency poised to help museums and libraries to serve the public in new ways.

AN INVESTMENT IN EDUCATION

IMLS promotes the role of museums and libraries as *centers of learning* that encourage new insights and critical thought.

- Information literacy
- Educational programs in every discipline
- After-school programs
- Homework centers
- Teacher support and training

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an investment that lasts a lifet

AN INVESTMENT IN ACCESS

Technology is shaping the way we learn, the way we work, and the way we communicate. IMLS helps libraries and museums ***narrow the digital divide and expand opportunity.***

- New digital content so everyone everywhere can access museum and library services
- Access to Internet resources
- Training
- Distance learning

AN INVESTMENT IN TOOLS FOR THE FUTURE

Making the most of new technology requires keeping an eye on the users of tomorrow. IMLS supports projects that shape digital resource management.

- Standards and best practices for managing and preserving digital resources
- New solutions to simplify finding information from many sources
- Technology to optimize institutional management

AN INVESTMENT IN FAMILIES AND CHILDREN

IMLS helps libraries and museums build *relationships that last a lifetime.*

- Family programs
- Parenting resources
- Programs for seniors
- Outreach and mobile exhibits
- Job, health, and literacy information

AN INVESTMENT IN COMMUNITIES

IMLS fosters the role of libraries and museums as *centers of civic engagement* and desti[illegible]ions for millions each year.

- Economic revitalization
- Cultural tourism
- Community gathering places

AN INVESTMENT IN OUR CULTURAL HERITAGE

IMLS supports the core needs of museums and libraries to *preserve their collections for the future.*

- Care for and digitization of collections
- Research on endangered species
- Preservation research and activities

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STRENGTHENING MUSEUM AND LIBRARY SERVICE

The Institute of Museum and Library Services is dedicated to strengthening museum and library service throughout the nation. Grants support the core activities of libraries and museums and encourage leadership, innovation, and partnership. A variety of funding opportunities meets the needs of all types of institutions, small and large, across the nation. IMLS strives to achieve excellence in grantmaking, evaluation, and communication.

GRANTMAKING

IMLS makes funding accessible with streamlined application and reporting requirements available on-line. IMLS grants encourage local participation and give grantees the greatest flexibility possible in deciding how to allocate resources. Grants emphasize professional collaboration and resource sharing.

EVALUATION

IMLS is a leader in encouraging outcome-based evaluation and providing training for grantees.

COMMUNICATION

IMLS shares promising practices and disseminates results through its web site, publications, and conferences.

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